

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-17 are pending in the application. Claims 1-4 and 6-9 have been rejected. Claims 5-8 and 10-17 are objected to. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's comments regarding the allowability of claims 5 and 10-17. Applicants have amended claims 1-10, 12, and 17.

Applicants respectfully submit that the objections under 37 CFR 1.75(a) and rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph and 35 U.S.C. §102(b), have been traversed, that no new matter has been entered, and that the application is in condition for allowance.

**Objections Under 37 CFR 1.75(a)**

The Examiner has objected to claims 5-8 and 10-17 under 37 CFR 1.75(a).

With respect to claims 5-8, the Examiner states that "the cited language is confusing since both the water and air passageways are both referred to simply as 'one' of said plurality of passageways. To address the Examiner's concerns, Applicants have amended claim 5 to recite, *inter alia*, "a first one of said passageways being a water injection passageway" and "interconnecting said water injection passageway to a second one of said plurality of passageways... said second one of the plurality of passageways flowing high pressure air". Claims 6-8 refer to the "water injection" passageway without stating the first one or the second one of said passageways to avoid any further confusion.

With respect to claims 10, 11, and 17, the Examiner states that the expression "water injection" is misused in this context since it describes a process rather than a flowable substance". Applicants have amended claims 10 and 17 by deleting the term "injection" so that the cited expressions refer simply to "water" as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully submit that original claim 11 does not include the term "water injection" and therefore does not require amending.

Applicants have further amended claim 12 to include the term "passageway" after "water injection", as suggested by the Examiner, to provide consistent terminology between independent claim 12 and dependant claims 13-16.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these objections, which Applicants consider obviated.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph**

Claims 2-4 and 6-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner states that "all of the listed claims require the step of 'eliminating a purge air system'" and that "the cited expression is thus indefinite since the step of eliminating an element has no clear meaning if the element itself was never positively included". To address the Examiner's concerns, Applicants have amended claims 2, 3, 6, and 7 to recite a method further comprising "flowing said atomizing air [high pressure air for claims 6 and 7] into the combustor via said second passageway [water injection passageway for claims 6 and 7] from an air source without a dedicated purge air system for said second passageway [water injection passageway for claims 6 and 7]".

The Examiner further states that the expressions "flameout due to excessive rapid introduction of water" and "water downstream of a first swirler", in claims 3 and 4, "have no clear meaning since the claims do not actually include any type of positively recited step or means for adding water". To address the Examiner's concerns, Applicants have amended claims 3, 4, 7, and 8 to recite a method further comprising "flowing water into the combustor via said second (water injection for claims 7 and 8) passageway".

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejection of claims 2-4 and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. §112.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102**

Claims 1 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Traver et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,438,963 (hereinafter "Traver").

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. V. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). It is submitted that Traver fails to teach each and every element as set forth in the claims 1 and 9 for at least the reasons described below.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 9 to recite, *inter alia*, a first and a second passageway (or water injection and first passageways for claim 9) each having a swirler. Additionally, claims 1 and 9 have been amended to include the conduit as being connected at a location upstream of the first swirler [second swirler for claim 9] and downstream of the second swirler [first for claim 9].

In contrast, Traver merely discloses various passageways within a liquid fuel purge system. The Examiner calls attention to Traver's Figure 2 and passageways connected directly to system components (i.e. air compressor 150 and air manifold 134) without reference to connections upstream or downstream of swirlers. Furthermore the disclosure of Traver includes no discussion or teaching of a swirler or any type of a restriction unit. Thus, Traver fails to teach interconnecting passageways having swirlers and a conduit being connected at a location upstream of the first swirler [second swirler for claim 9] and downstream of the second swirler [first for claim 9], as claimed in amended claims 1 and 9.

Accordingly, claims 1 and 9 are believed to be patentably distinct and nonobvious in view of Traver. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections of claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

All of the objections and rejections are herein overcome. No new matter is added by way of the present Amendment or Remarks, as support is found throughout the original filed specification, claims, and drawings. Moreover, the amendment as presented does not alter the scope of the claimed invention and therefore cannot necessitate a new grounds rejection.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance in the next action.

In the event of any queries regarding the instantly submitted amendment, Applicants' attorney respectfully requests the courtesy of a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this response or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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